

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

[Docket No. NHTSA-2003-16450]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This document announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is December 10, 2003.**ADDRESSES:** Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.].

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477-78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Coleman Sachs, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-3151).**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Background**

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA

has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115, and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the **Federal Register** of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the **Federal Register**.

Automobile Concepts, Inc. of North Miami, Florida ("AMC") (Registered Importer 01-278) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which AMC believes are substantially similar are 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars to their U.S.-certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

AMC submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified 2000-2002 BMW 5 Series passenger cars are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence*, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 109 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124

Accelerator Control Systems, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

The petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) Inscription of the word "brake" on the dash in place of the international ECE warning symbol; (b) replacement of the speedometer to read in miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamps which incorporate front sidemarker lights; (b) installation of U.S.-model tail lamp assemblies which incorporate rear sidemarker lights; (d) installation of a U.S.-model high mounted stop lamp.

Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*: Installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: Replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component, or inscription of the required warning statement on the mirror's face.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: Activation of the warning buzzer.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: Reprogramming of the power window system so that the windows will not operate with the ignition switched off.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) Activation of the seat belt warning buzzer by reprogramming the unit; (b) inspection of all vehicles and replacement of the driver's and passenger's air bags, head air bags, side air bags, knee bolsters, control units, sensors, and seat belts with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped. Petitioner states that the vehicles should be equipped in the front and rear outboard seating positions with combination lap and shoulder belts that are self-tensioning and that release by means of a single red pushbutton. Petitioner further states that the vehicles are equipped with a seat belt warning lamp that is identical to the lamp installed on U.S.-certified models.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: Inspection of all vehicles to ensure that they are equipped with door bars in the front and rear doors identical